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June 30, 2008
PAO 06-30-08

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

‘Coyote One’ mentors Afghan police and Soldiers

By Jasper DesLauriers

RAPID CITY, S.D.- After just two months on duty in southwest Asia, the 16-member South Dakota Army National Guard Embedded Training Team, known as ‘Coyote One,’ is actively engaged in helping Afghanistan advance its independence.

Located at various bases in northern Afghanistan, Coyote One’s mission is to mentor the Afghan National Police and Army, which requires a personal relationship to be forged with the policemen and Soldiers the Guardsmen work with daily.

Lt. Col. John P. Weber, of Rapid City and commander of Coyote One, said even though his team members spend a majority of their time mentoring, communication is still the unit’s greatest challenge because of language and cultural issues.

“Communication is slow, therefore missions can take longer to accomplish,” said Weber. “Plus culturally, conducting business takes time here. There is the expected protocol of discussing and asking about one’s family prior to handling any official business.”

Weber added the civilian skills of his South Dakota National Guard team members have greatly enhanced the unit’s ability to accomplish its mission.

“Civilian skills are a tremendous asset to this mission,” said Weber. “This is a very diverse country and the broader range of skills you can bring to the table, the better chance you will have to connect with someone here.”

A typical day for the members of Coyote One includes spending time with their Afghan counterparts whether they are just down the road or hours away.

“The more we are with our Afghan counterparts the more success we will have,” said Weber. “Getting out with them is the key to mission success.”

But according to Weber, mission success starts back home in South Dakota.

“Our families are truly the ones that make this happen,” said Weber. “What we do here is challenging most days, but what our families are doing back home is equally challenging.”

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FOR MORE INFORMATION, please contact Maj. Orson Ward at (605) 737-6721, or cell (605) 431-8753.

Photo Cut Lines:



Coyote One in Afghanistan: The South Dakota Army National Guard Embedded Training Team ‘Coyote One’ on April 20 at Mazar-e-Sharif, Afghanistan. (National Guard courtesy photo)

Link to photo: https://sdguard.ngb.army.mil/released/Coyote_One_in_Afghanistan.jpg



LTC Weber with Afghan police: Lt. Col. Weber and two Afghan National Police officers take a short break during a dismounted patrol near Aliabad, Afghanistan. (National Guard courtesy photo)

Link to photo:

https://sdguard.ngb.army.mil/released/LTC_Weber_with_Afgan_police.jpg

NOTE 1: Since the terrorist attacks on America, the South Dakota National Guard has mobilized more than 3,100 Soldiers and 780 Airmen in support of the Global War on Terror.

Currently, more than 340 Soldiers and Airmen from the South Dakota National Guard remain on duty in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other locations throughout Southwest Asia. More than 3,800 National Guardsmen are available in South Dakota to provide support for state and national emergencies and homeland defense.